



TRADE NEWS

SPRING 2003

Austin U.S. Export Assistance Center Serving Central Texas

P.O. Box 12728
Austin, TX 78711
512-916-5940 fax

Karen Parker –
International Trade Specialist
512-916-5939

Larry Tabash –
International Trade Specialist
512-936-0039

IzaLaura Morales
Trade Assistant
512-936-0441



**Publicize your products
worldwide in Commercial
News U.S.A.**

May 2003

- Building, construction & hardware
- Automotive
- Aviation & marine products
- Equipment & supplies
- Health/fashion & beauty products
- Hotel & restaurant equipment/food & food processing

Closing date: March 18, 2003.

June 2003

- Medical/Scientific Products & Equipment
- Industrial Equipment, Services & Supplies
- Sports & Recreation Equipment & Supplies

Closing date: April 15, 2003

July 2003

- Environmental
- Safety & Security
- Agricultural Products & Equipment
- Consumer Goods

Closing date: May 13, 2003

AUSTIN ASIA EVENT

On May 20th, the Austin USEAC, International Business Institute of Austin Community College, and the Texas Economic Development, will host three Senior Commercial Officers from Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Watch for details on this upcoming event, along with an opportunity to meet in one-on-one appointments. Leading sectors in these countries include...

Vietnam: Electrical Power Equipment & Power Transmission Equipment, Computer Hardware, Oil and Gas Machinery and Services, Aircraft and Parts, Telecommunications Equipment and Services, Computer Software and Services, Medical Equipment, Airport and Ground Support Equipment, Safety and Security Equipment, and Environment and Pollution Control Equipment/Services.

Indonesia: Industrial Chemicals, Pollution Control Equipment, Water Resources Equipment and Services, Telecommunications Equipment, Aircraft Parts, Oil and Gas field machinery, General Services, Franchising, Electrical Power Systems, Security and Safety Equipment, Computers and Peripherals, and Educational and Training Services.

Malaysia: Healthcare, Oil and Gas Equipment, Telecommunications, Higher Education, Water & Wastewater Provision & Treatment, and Municipal Solid Waste Management.

TRADE INFORMATION

Commerce Department Launches Web Site in Spanish

Designed to inform the Hispanic community of changes in the economy, upcoming trade development missions, high tech issues and trade opportunities, the web site also allows users to access information about minority development, export assistance, grant opportunities, and contracting and career opportunities. The address is: http://www.commerce.gov/index_spanish.htm

How to Use the World Bank Website for Commercial Opportunities

The Commercial Service has created a fifteen-minute tutorial on "How to Navigate the World Bank Website" to evaluate commercial opportunities and contacts for project and Bank-financed procurement opportunities that U.S. firms can participate in. The navigating tool uses step-by-step instructions to help US firms locate Project Information Documents (PIDs), bidding documents and the Monthly Operational Summary (MOS), a listing of all recently approved projects and the amount of their funding. This navigating tool can be accessed by e-mailing Eric Henderson with the Commercial Service World Bank at ehenderson@worldbank.org. The World Bank (WB) lends \$15 - 25 billion annually to developing country governments to fund projects for economic development and poverty reduction. This funding generates some 40,000 contracts each year for private companies to supply a wide range of goods and equipment, services and civil works. Contracts range from several hundred million to a few thousand dollars, representing significant export opportunities for companies large and small.

New Help for Determining Need for Export License

The Bureau of Industry and Security has launched its online *Introduction to U.S. Export Control* designed to educate new exporters on U.S. export regulations. See www.bis.doc.gov and click on *Export Control Basics*.

COUNTRY INFORMATION

Afghanistan: Procurement Opportunities

The Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) is sending requests for procurements through the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. At this point the requests for procurement are basic and oriented to getting the AIA up and running. Companies with local representatives in that region who can supply the AIA should contact: Michael McGee, Commercial Officer, Afghanistan Reconstruction, ph: 9251- 282-3699, fax: 9251-282-3981 or michael.mcgee@mail.doc.gov; or Hanscom Smith at kabulecon@state.gov

Argentina: Exchange and VAT

Argentine Central Bank ended all remaining foreign exchange restrictions that regulated import transaction payments. This means that new Argentine imports will no longer face payment delays on release of foreign exchange. This new measure should reduce U.S. exporters' concerns regarding payment issues. Foreign companies can now freely repatriate profits. Argentina added back the 21% value-added tax (VAT to 19%, expired and the VAT returned to 21%).

China: Compulsory Certification (CCC) Mark

The government of China has introduced a new safety license system. The new system requires manufacturers in 132 product categories to obtain the China Compulsory Certification (CCC) mark before exporting to or selling in the China market. The new system, implemented on May 1, 2002 and fully effective on May 1, 2003, will impact many U.S. exporters, across a wide range of manufacturing sectors. Products not meeting CCC requirements may be held at the border by Chinese Customs and will be subject to other penalties. See www.mac.doc.gov/china/docs/businessguides.cccguide.htm

China: Success for Small Business

It is often assumed that only large firms can successfully do business in China. In fact, many Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME's) are successfully doing business in China. There is an excellent article in the January/February 2003 issue of The China Business Review - "The Small Fry Take on China ---- Learning from the experiences of others can help small businesses new to China avoid costly mistakes. Plus: Keys to Business Success in China". The article is nine pages long and a perfect handout for small and medium-sized U.S. companies interested in China. For more information visit <http://www.chinabusinessreview.com/0301/gallant.html>

Egypt: Free Currency Market

Egypt reversed a long-standing policy of fixed exchange rates and announced that its currency would float. This is the first time ever that Egypt has departed from its traditional policy of controlling the foreign exchange rate through the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE). This rigidity had long been justified as necessary to protect the national currency. Nevertheless, Egypt has been constantly urged by the International Financial Institutions and donor countries to free its current market. Many Egyptians too had become convinced that more flexible rates were needed to spur the economy (especially since exchange rate rigidity was seen as a major impediment to business activity). The lack of foreign exchange has been a major problem for businesses with both Egyptian and foreign companies complaining (foreign exchange and problems with Customs have been the most frequently named complaints). Experts have also welcomed the new mechanism and investors praised the new exchange rate system saying that it would enhance confidence in the Egyptian economy and make Egyptian exports more competitive (and possibly give a boost to the stagnant stock market).

Mexico: Product Certification and Verification Comments

On Tuesday, March 4, 2003 the GOM published in the Diario Oficial de la Federacion (DOF) - the Mexican Federal Gazette – the current text of the Conformity Assessment Policies and Procedures – Certification and verifications procedures of products subject to compliance with Official Mexican Standards issued by the Secretariat of the Economy. The publication follows recent trends towards openness and transparency in the General Directorate for Standards (DGN) of the Secretariat of the Economy. The intention of the publication is to gather comments from interested parties on possible changes to the current procedures in order to develop new proposed procedures. The new proposed procedures, once developed, will in turn be published for a 60-calendar day public comment period. Interested parties have an undefined amount of time to submit to the DGN comments, opinions, and suggestions for the improvement of the current procedures. Keeping in mind that the intention is to gather information to develop a set of proposed new procedures, it is important to submit comments as soon as possible. The text of the proposed conformity assessment policies and procedures for labeling requirements in the border region is available (in Spanish) at the following link: <http://www.economia.gob.mx/?P=989> , just click on "Texto Integro". For more information contact Ivan Rios at ivan.rios@mail.doc.gov

Netherlands: European Lotto scam Alert

Be wary of emails stating that you are a winner in the De Lotto Netherlands Lottery. The U.S. Commercial Service in The Hague advises that these email scams are becoming increasingly common and they have been contacted by U.S. citizens who have lost money trying to claim their "prize". Please do not pursue these lotto scams.

Venezuela

On Feb. 5, 2003, the Venezuelan government announced the enactment of foreign exchange control regime that sets forth limitations and restrictions to the free convertibility and transferability of foreign exchange. U.S. companies with interests in Venezuela are advised to monitor this situation, since no foreign currency will be available in Venezuela until the mechanisms of the control system are defined and set in place.

Yugoslavia Dissolved

On February 4, the Balkan federation of Yugoslavia was dissolved. The new nation is called Serbia and Montenegro. According to a European Union brokered agreement, the two countries will maintain a quasi-union, but may lead to the independence of each country in the next few years.

WEBSITE

Google Language Tools – http://www.google.com/language_tools. At this site you can search for Web sites by language and country, and when you find a site that looks interesting, you can click on "Translate this page" in the search results.

Transparency International – <http://www.transparency.org> Transparency International is a nonprofit organization that monitors corruption worldwide, and this site has useful information for businesspeople.

To get your own subscription of **Really Useful Sites for International Trade Professionals**, FITA's free bi-weekly newsletter, go to <http://fita.org/usefulregister.html>

Harvard's Global Trade Negotiations Page – <http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade/index.html>

Note: The U.S. Government does not endorse products or companies and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the data contained herein, or for the success or failure of any business transactions resulting from opportunities listed in this publication.